

REMARKS:

In the outstanding Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 13 and 17. Claims 13 and 17 are amended herein, and new claim 18 is added. Claims 1-12 and 14-16 remain cancelled. No new matter is presented. Thus, claims 13, 17 and 18 are pending and under consideration. The rejections are traversed below.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 103(a):

Claims 13 and 17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,308,164 (Nummelin) and U.S. Patent No. 5,557,515 (Abbrussese).

The Examiner maintains the comparison of Nummelin that manages information relating to projects with the claimed invention for managing contents of the tasks themselves. According to Nummelin, primary information fields that contain information such as scheduling of projects, conflicts, tracking of time/costs and resources and secondary information fields that contain other information that is non-essential to the function of the project management system are tracked for projects (see, col. 7, lines 57-64). However, the information tracked in Nummelin is limited to analyzing information pertaining to the projects and not the work product prepared by the users.

The Examiner appears to imply that “storing... elements forming tasks... subsequent to an electronic authorization or repudiation” (claim 13) and “associating elements forming completed tasks with a user...” (claim 17) are described in col. 7, lines 24-37 of Nummelin. This portion of Nummelin specifically states:

“The project manager workstations 120 are used to create, modify and validate project information (projects, project tasks and resources) and to receive project data including task status input by resources at resource workstations. In the preferred embodiment, this is accomplished using Microsoft Project, project management software operating on the workstation. The project management software includes a function 226 for creating or modifying projects, tasks and resources by providing fields into which a project manager inputs primary and secondary information. In accordance with the invention, the software has been modified to include a function 224 for validating the information input into specific fields as predefined by project management system.”

(col. 7, lines 24-37 of Nummelin)

As can be seen from the above discussion, this portion of Nummelin does not discuss the claimed feature of “elements forming the task” that refers to a specific piece of work. Instead, information managed in Nummelin is project related information and not the specific work prepared or developed by the users.

The Examiner relies on Abbrussese as teaching “displaying retrieved repudiation results...” and “indicating elements of a new electronically processed task... for focus of review.” However, the diary function in Abbrussese is limited to prioritizing work and scheduling various tasks (i.e., docket legal due dates, schedule of meetings, business deadlines) and does not teach or suggest identify points of a claim to be reviewed by a claims handler based on previous review of another claim (see, col. 65 lines 5-67 of Abbrussese).

In contrast to Nummelin and Abbrussese, the claimed invention provides an efficient review process by limiting points to be reviewed for a current task based on previously reviewed elements of other tasks completed by the user.

Independent claim 13 recites, “storing a plurality of elements forming tasks electronically processed into a database subsequent to an electronic authorization or repudiation” and “retrieving said database for a task including elements forming the task to be electronically authorized and for the user requesting authorization of said task.” Claim 13 further recites, “displaying retrieved repudiation reasons for the task and retrieved repudiation reasons for the user”, where a user authorizing the current task is provided with “information indicative of which elements forming the current task to be electronically authorized should be reviewed based on a predetermined number of said retrieved repudiation reasons for the task and the user.”

Similarly, independent claim 17 recites, “indicating elements of a new electronically processed task presented by the user for focus of review in accordance with the association of the elements forming the completed tasks corresponding to the user” and “based on a predetermined number of repudiation reasons retrieved for the task and the user.”

Nummelin and Abbrussese, alone or in combination, do not teach or suggest the above-discussed features including use of previously reviewed tasks and “predetermined number of repudiation reasons” as a reference for review when reviewing a current task (see claims 13 and 17).

Therefore, withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

NEW CLAIM:

New claim 18 has been added to recite, “receiving a first task having contents developed by a user” and “comparing the contents of the first task with contents of a second task previously developed by the user and reviewed by a reviewer.” Claim 18 further recites, “identifying an object among the contents of the first task as a point to be authorized or repudiated by the

reviewer when said comparing indicates that the object of the first task is identical to an object of the second task previously developed and reviewed.”

Nummelin and Abbrussese, do not teach or suggest, “comparing the contents of the first task with contents of a second task previously developed by the user” and “ identifying an object among the contents of the first task as a point to be authorized or repudiated”, as recited in claim 18.

It is submitted that new claim 18 is patentably distinguishable over Nummelin and Abbrussese.

CONCLUSION:

There being no further outstanding objections or rejections, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. An early action to that effect is courteously solicited.

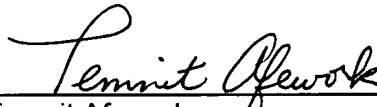
If there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to these matters.

If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

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